

Sotheby's to Present **SACRED SPLENDOR: JUDAICA FROM THE ARTHUR AND GITEL MARX COLLECTION**

A Collection of 300+ Treasures
Spanning Five Centuries of Jewish History



Dedicated Auction In New York
On 20 November

Public Exhibitions Open 17 November on York Avenue

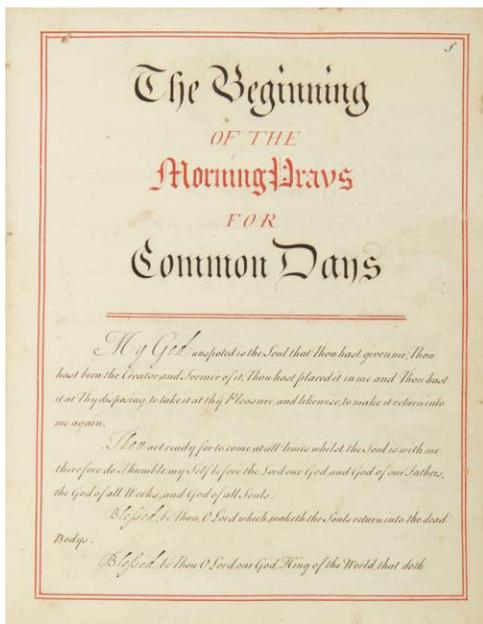
NEW YORK, 11 October 2019 – Sotheby’s is pleased to announce that we will present *Sacred Splendor: Judaica from the Arthur and Gitel Marx Collection* in a dedicated auction on 20 November in New York. The exceptional and rare objects that comprise the Marx Collection illustrate the expansiveness of Jewish history from the 15th century through the 20th century across Europe, the Middle East, North Africa and the Americas. The approximately 300 lots in the auction – comprising Judaica books and manuscripts, paintings and metalwork – touch every aspect of Jewish life and constitute one of the most significant collections to come to market in the past two decades.

Carefully assembled over five decades, the Marx Collection began as one of Judaica silver and paintings, and expanded into an ever-widening search for Jewish books and manuscripts of the utmost rarity. The result is a wide-ranging assemblage of works that trace the history of Jewish thought and scholarship throughout the world.

Sacred Splendor: Judaica from the Arthur and Gitel Marx Collection will be on public view in our York Avenue galleries from 17 – 19 November alongside the exhibition of Israeli & International Art.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE COLLECTION

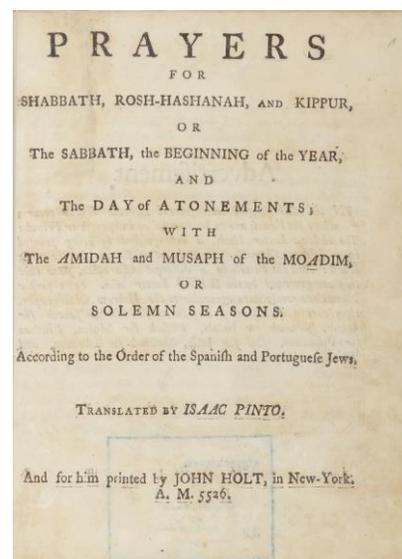
BOOKS & MANUSCRIPTS



Leading the books and manuscripts section is **An Exquisitely-Decorated Early English Translation of the Siddur (Prayer Book), According to the Sephardic Rite** (left, estimate \$200/300,000). Handwritten in London circa 1730-1750, this lot is one of the earliest known translations of the Sephardic prayer book into English, telling a rich and complex tale of linguistic assimilation, religious devotion, and communal censorship among English Jews in the 17th and 18th centuries. Due to its beautiful decorative program, excellent state of preservation, and historical significance as an early witness to the “Englishing” of British Jewry, this book was included in both the 1887 Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition and the 1956 Anglo-Jewish Art & History Exhibition in the Victoria and Albert Museum marking the

tercentenary of the resettlement of Jews in England.

The Collection also features a strong group of American Judaica, led by a monthly run of **The Occident and American Jewish Advocate** edited **Isaac Leeser**, *hazzan (cantor)* of Philadelphia's Mikveh Israel congregation (estimate \$100/120,00). *The Occident*, published from 1843-1869, was the first successful Jewish serial periodical in America, and ultimately defined American Jewry and American Judaism for the 19th century. It is arguably the single most important historical record of mid-19th-century Jewish life in the Western Hemisphere. Additional highlights include the **first complete Jewish prayer book printed in America**, translated by Isaac Pinto (right, estimate \$40/60,000), and the **first edition of the most authoritative code of Jewish law, known as Shulhan Arukh**, compiled in the mid-16th century by Rabbi Joseph Caro (estimate \$30/40,000).



Another highlight of the important book offerings is a **Minhogim printed by Giovanni di Gara in Venice, 1600-01** (estimate \$30/40,000). This beautifully-illustrated Yiddish book of customs features a unique series of woodcuts depicting various aspects of Jewish life in Renaissance Italy. The present lot, issued by Venetian publisher, Giovanni di Gara, is the third edition of a classic, comprehensive compendium of Ashkenazic custom produced in Yiddish by Simeon ha-Levi Günzburg, a publisher and communal functionary descended from German Jews who had migrated to Northern Italy. It is based in large part on the Hebrew custumal compiled by Rabbi Isaac Tyrnau in the first half of the fifteenth century, but it also expands on the latter's work with explanations of various practices and additional comments on ritual and religious life. These images, which would never again be used at a Jewish press, are extraordinarily rare, even more so given that only four copies of this title are known to be held in public collections.

RITUAL SILVER AND METALWORK

Among the ritual objects on offer is an important **German Parcel-Gilt Silver Hevra Kadisha Tall Beaker** from Augsburg circa 1711-15 (estimate \$100/150,000). The finely detailed object is engraved with the names of individual members of the Darmstadt community, arranged in a circle around their Zodiac sign or emblem, displaying the excellent craftsmanship of silversmith Martin Breuer.

Additional silver highlights include a **German Cast Filigree Torah Shield** by Johann Valentin Schüller circa 1700 (estimate \$80/120,000), which previously appeared in the Sotheby's landmark auction of The Michael and Judy

Steinhardt Judaica Collection in 2013; an **American Bronze Statue of Liberty Hanukah Lamp** from 1986 (estimate \$10/15,000) and a monumental 1950's **Silver Mezuzah** by Ilya Shor (estimate \$25/35,000).

IMPORTANT PAINTINGS



The Marx collection is led by Isidor Kaufmann's painting of the **Son of the Miracle-Working Rabbi of Belz** (left, estimate \$600/800,000). Published on the cover of the artist's seminal monograph, *Isidor Kaufmann, 1853-1921, Bilder, Bocher, Talmuschüler* – on the occasion of the artist's retrospective at the Jewish Museum, Vienna in 1995 – the work has become an icon of Kaufmann's works. Exquisite in its detail, the painting is exceptional in that Kaufmann rarely titled his works. In this case, he drew attention to this

particular boy, who was the son of one of the most significant Talmudic leaders of the time, a scion of the Belzer Chassidic dynasty.

The fine arts section is further highlighted by several other works by premier Jewish painters including Maurycy Gottlieb, Joseph Israels and 3 other works by Isidor Kaufmann. Of great significance is an exquisite synagogue scene by the French artist Edouard Brandon, **Bar Mitzvah** (estimate \$50/70,000) and a colorful collage of **Hassidic Figures: Gardener, Dancer, Man of Prayer** by Ilya Schor (estimate \$20/30,000).

About Sotheby's

Sotheby's has been uniting collectors with world-class works of art since 1744. Sotheby's became the first international auction house when it expanded from London to New York (1955), the first to conduct sales in Hong Kong (1973), India (1992) and France (2001), and the first international fine art auction house in China (2012). Today, Sotheby's has a global network of 80 offices in 40 countries and presents auctions in 10 different salesrooms, including New York, London, Hong Kong and Paris. Sotheby's offers collectors the resources of *Sotheby's Financial Services*, the world's only full-service art financing company, as well as the collection, artist, estate & foundation advisory services of its subsidiary, *Art Agency, Partners*. Sotheby's also presents private sale opportunities in more than 70 categories, including S|2, the gallery arm of Sotheby's Global Fine Art Division, and three retail businesses: Sotheby's Wine, Sotheby's Diamonds, and Sotheby's Home, the online marketplace for interior design.

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**Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer's premium and are net of any fees paid to the purchaser where the purchaser provided an irrevocable bid.*

Images are available upon request

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